

# **NOMINATION FORM**

## **2010 ENVIRONMENTAL HERO OF THE NORTH BAY AWARD**

Assemblymember Jared Huffman will honor an outstanding organization or individual for leadership, innovation, and community service in promoting environmental stewardship.

### **NOMINEE INFORMATION:**

#### **INDIVIDUAL:**

Individual's Name: **Carleen Cullen**

Current Position: **Founder and Executive Director**

Organization: **Cool the Earth**

Company Address: **PO Box 694**

Website: [www.cooltheearth.org](http://www.cooltheearth.org)

City, State, Zip: **Kentfield, CA 94914**

#### **WRITTEN STATEMENT:**

How has this nominee demonstrated leadership and innovation in environmental stewardship?

What is exceptional about this nominee?

Please describe how the nominee's accomplishments have positively impacted the environment.

#### **NOMINATOR'S STATEMENT:**

In 2007 Marin County parent and business entrepreneur Carleen Cullen launched Cool the Earth in her children's school in Kentfield, California; thanks to her innovative work and steadfast determination the program is now reaching 100 schools in the Bay Area and nationwide. Cool the Earth is a transformational school-based program which educates kids and their families about climate change and motivates them to take simple, measurable actions to reduce their carbon footprint. The program uses a child-driven model to inspire families to reduce energy use. Although the organization was just founded three years ago, the measurable results and effectiveness of the organization has been significant and commendable. Since its inception, CTEI has been responsible for motivating over 88,000 energy-saving actions taken by over 47,000 school children and family member—eliminating 68 million pounds of carbon from the atmosphere—with positive environmental benefits for the region.

Cullen was motivated to found the organization after seeing the film "An Inconvenient Truth" and felt compelled to make a difference in her community for the benefit of her children and the children of others. Cullen was so determined to enlist her community to join her cause that she set about holding free screenings of "An Inconvenient Truth" for parents in her school district, and then held discussion groups afterward. When she found that people could remain lethargic about changing their energy-consumption habits, even after being exposed to the realities of global warming, she set about to develop an awareness program call "Cool the Earth" which she hoped would motivate households to make carbon-reducing changes instantly—what she calls "education through action." After first launching her program "Cool the Earth" at her children's school (Bacich Elementary) despite initial opposition from the school administrators, Carleen was able to galvanize local parents and leaders in the community to expand the program to twenty five Marin County schools within a matter of six months.

The 4-6 month program launches with a school-wide assembly featuring an age-appropriate play which educates children about global warming and empowers them to take action. Students then go home with a coupon book containing 20 energy saving actions. To ensure that environmental considerations become an integral part of our participant's everyday living, the families and children commit to taking actions over the entire year. Finally the school displays a highly visible tracking banner to illustrate to the school community that collectively their actions significantly impact climate change.

For her work as executive director, Carleen offers her skills full-time as an in-kind donation to the organization. Carleen's business background has been an asset to her in her role. Through diligence and tenacious pursuit of building her non-profit, Carleen has been able to acquire funding for Cool the Earth during this difficult economic period. She has expanded the program by forming key public/private partnerships with the Bay Area Air District, Girl Scouts of Northern California, PG&E, Marin Community Foundation, Marin Conservation Corps, Strategic Energy Innovations, Marin Municipal Water District and Safe Routes to School.